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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT & TRADEMARK OFFICE

IN RE APPLICATION OF :  
CHARLES EDWARD SIGLER, ET AL. : EXAMINER: WORJLOH, JALATEE  
SERIAL NO: 09/715,176 :  
FILED: NOVEMBER 20, 2000 : GROUP ART UNIT: 3621  
FOR: SYSTEM, METHOD, AND COMPUTER PROGRAM PRODUCT FOR  
MAINTAINING CONSUMER PRIVACY AND SECURITY IN ELECTRONIC  
COMMERCE TRANSACTIONS

**RESPONSE TO RESTRICTION REQUIREMENT**

COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22313-1450

SIR:

In response to the Restriction Requirement dated August 1, 2003, Applicants provisionally elect with traverse Group I, Claims 1-14, 24, and 43-51, drawn to maintaining anonymity of a buyer. Applicants traverse the restriction requirement for the following reasons:

MPEP § 803 provides:

... If the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the Examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to distinct or independent inventions.

However, the outstanding Restriction Requirement has not established that an undue burden would exist if the Restriction Requirement was not issued and all the claims were examined together. Moreover, the claims of the present invention would appear to be part of an overlapping search area. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully also traverse the outstanding Restriction Requirement on the grounds that a search and examination of the entire application would not place a *serious* burden on the Examiner.

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Response to Restriction Requirement dated August 1, 2003

Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the requirement to elect a single group be withdrawn, and that a full examination on the merits of Claims 1-52 be conducted.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,  
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'TJ Fisher', written over a horizontal line.

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